

Report of the Droop Mountain Battlefield Commission

The Droop Mountain Battlefield Commission respectfully submits the following report: That on the 25th day of January, 1927, House Joint Resolution No. 8, was adopted, which is as follows:

"Providing for the appointment of a commission for the battlefield on Droop Mountain."

Resolved by the Legislature of West Virginia:

WHEREAS, One of the hard fought battles of the Civil War occurred at Droop Mountain, on November 11, 1863, a battle in which West Virginia soldiers, both Union and Confederate, participated; and,

WHEREAS, The intervening years have obliterated many of the scars of that battle, yet there are still living old soldiers and citizens who can mark out the various positions of the different regiments, battalions and companies that were engaged in the battle; and,

WHEREAS, Droop Mountain is a very high elevation overlooking the valley of the Greenbrier River, the little levels of Pocahontas County, and the far off peaks of the Alleghany Mountains, making it one of the most beautiful scenic spots in West Virginia; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Governor be requested to appoint a committee of five, three from the House and two from the Senate, whose duty it will be to look over the battlefield, temporarily mark the battle lines, and secure all necessary information from the old soldiers and citizens yet living in the community, that everything authentic may be preserved for future generations. The committee shall ascertain the owners of the land upon which the battle was fought and take a conditional option on some part of such land, of not less than fifty acres, at a price that seems reasonable to the committee.

The members of the committee shall be paid their actual expenses incurred in carrying out this resolution.

Pursuant to the Joint Resolution aforesaid and in compliance therewith, your Excellency on the 21st day of April, 1927, appointed a commission as follows:

From the House of Delegates:

John D. Sutton of Sutton, West Virginia.

N. F. Kendall of Grafton, West Virginia.

M. M. Harrison of Confidence, West Virginia.

From the Senate:

A. L. Helmick of Thomas, West Virginia.

Robert F. Kidd of Glenville, West Virginia.

That your Commission met on the 28th day of April, 1927, in the City of Charleston, and organized by the election of John D. Sutton as chairman and N. F. Kendall as Secretary.

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The Commission at this meeting authorized the Chairman to employ a competent engineer to aid and assist in the preparation of the map of the battlefield, showing the most important points in this, one of the fiercest and most decisive battles waged on West Virginia soil during the Civil War. The Commission then adjourned to meet at the call of the Chairman.

Your Commission pursuant to the call of the Chairman on the 18th day of July, 1927, met at Marlinton and on the 19th visited the scene of the battlefield on Droop Mountain, accompanied by quite a number of prominent and interested citizens from Marlinton and Hillsboro—many of whom were thoroughly acquainted with the battlefield and furnished much valuable information to the Commission.

On July 20th, 1927, the Commission met in session at the residence of Mrs. Rebecca B. McCarty, which is located on the farm where the great and destructive battle was fought. All of the members of the Commission were present.

The Commission inspected the battlefield and made a fairly complete survey of the same. It comprises more than two thousand acres of territory.

Your Commission further reports that they stood on the summit of Droop Mountain on a calm, quiet summer day, when the whole surrounding country seemed at peace and there was nothing to indicate that sixty-four years prior to that time those who wore the blue and those clad in the gray were engaged on that hill in one gigantic struggle for the mastery of West Virginia, then in its infancy. Each army fought for what it believed to be right and nearly all of the men who were actors in that bloody drama were West Virginians. But the North and South ended their bitter struggle, the Republic was preserved, and the animosity engendered by that conflict has passed away and universal peace reigns throughout the Republic.

The scene spread out before us was one of indescribable beauty and enchantment. Towering mountains, the smiling and fertile plain and the famous and historic Greenbrier River, flowing gently at the base of the rugged mountain. Nowhere in all of our travels have we witnessed such scenic beauty or such a location for a great State Park.

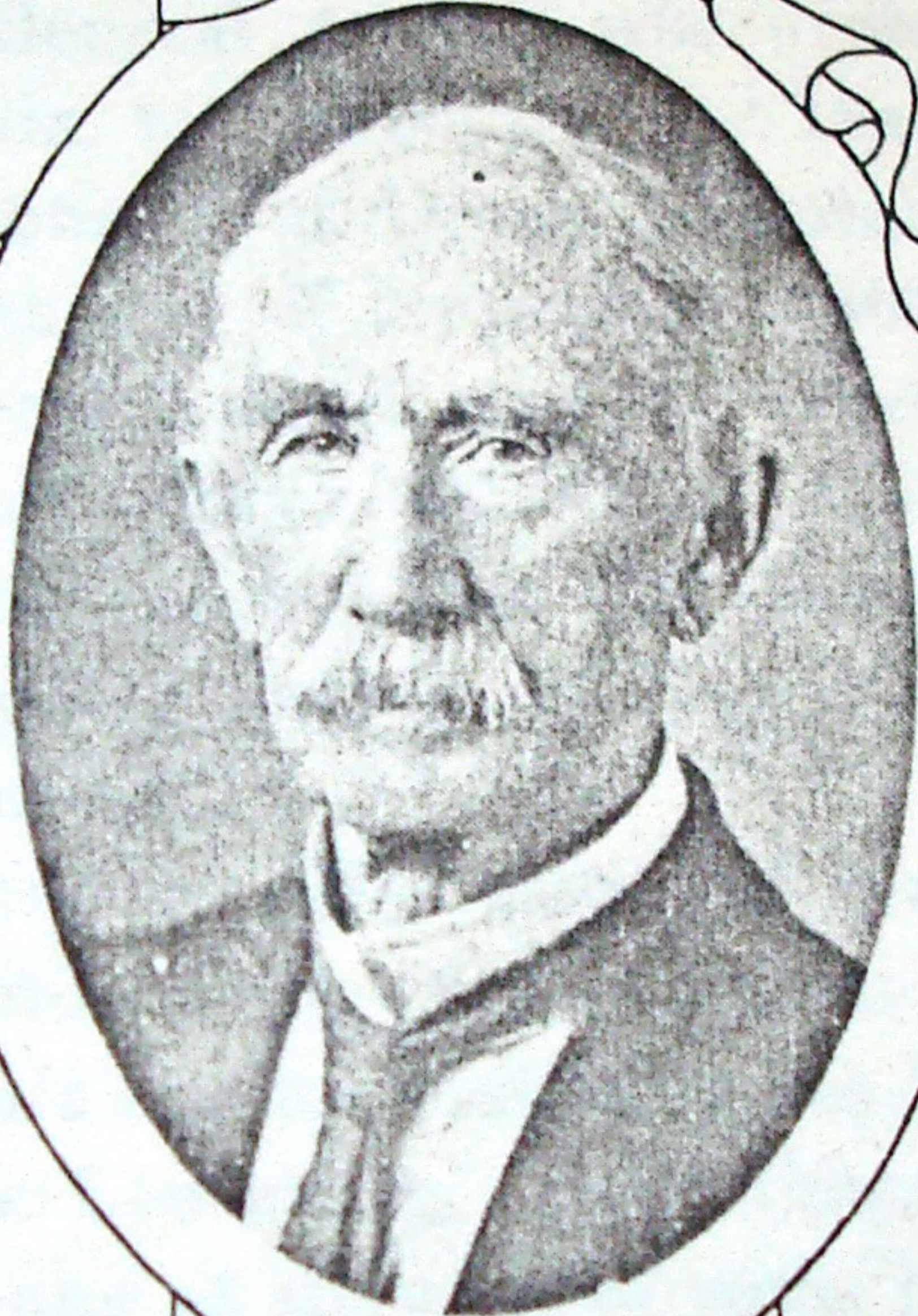
After such inspection your Commission decided that a part of the battlefield should be optioned for "A Battlefield State Park" and decided that the ground embraced in the McCarty farm, con-



SENATOR R. F. KIDD



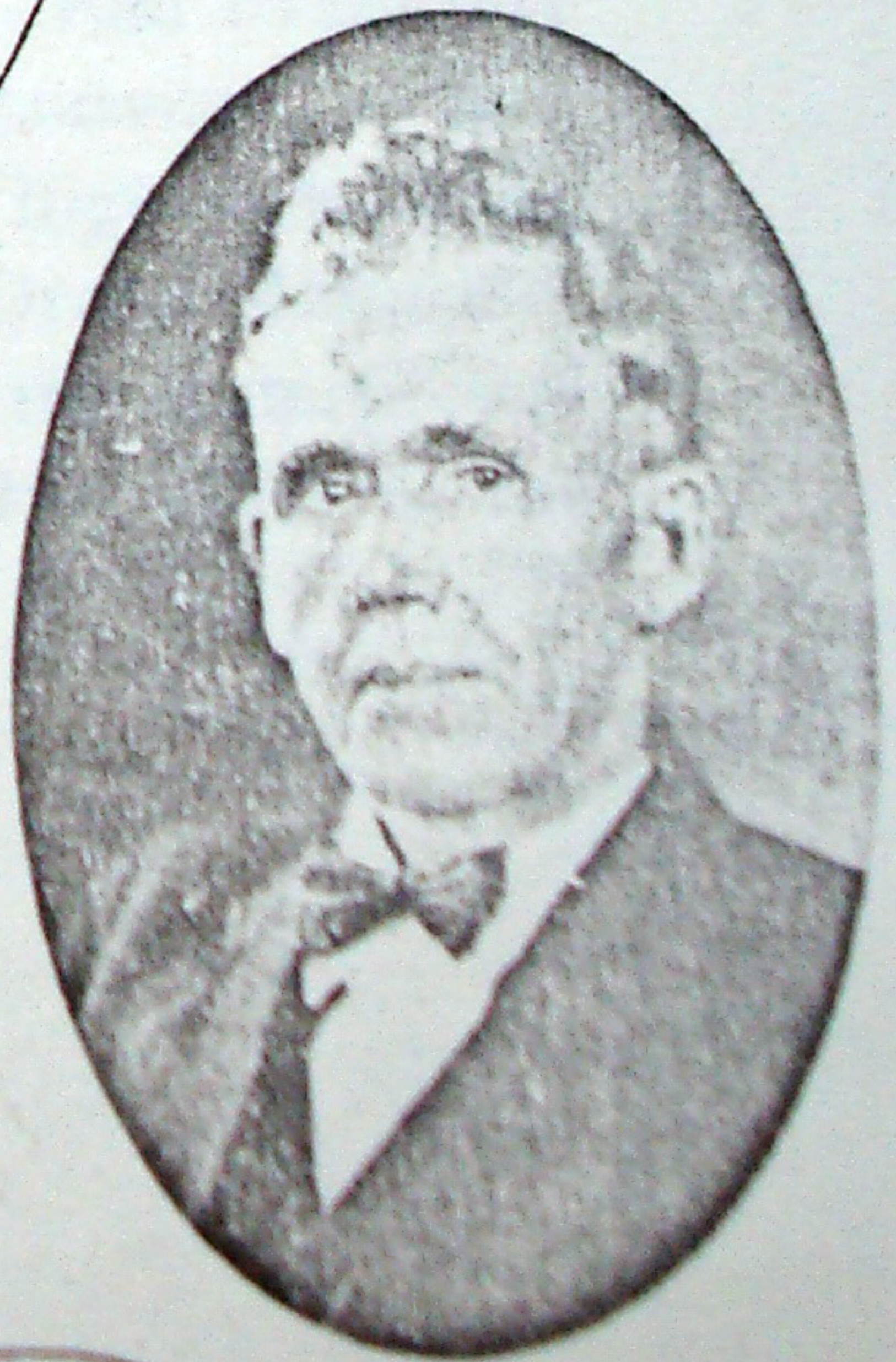
SENATOR A. L. HELMICK



DELEGATE JOHN D. SUTTON
CHAIRMAN



DELEGATE N. F. KENDALL, SECRETARY



DELEGATE M. M. HARRISON

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sisting of about one hundred and forty-one acres, this covering the spot where the battle was most fiercely waged, and such option was obtained, subject, however to a reservation of fifteen acres around the residence and also the graveyard of one-half acre.

This option is filed herewith and made part of this report and the Secretary was directed to send a copy of the option to your Excellency. The matter of making a survey and of locating and marking the important points of interest was left to the Chairman.

Your Commission further reports that the Chairman caused to be made a map of the said battlefield, showing the location of the battle lines and position of the different units engaged therein, as well as much other valuable information, which plat is filed herewith and made part of this report.

The Commission then adjourned to meet again at the call of the Chairman. A call was made by him for a meeting to be held at Weston, West Virginia, on the 28th day of December, 1927, at which meeting all the members were present, except Delegate Harrison. At this meeting the scope of the report of the Commission was decided upon and the preparation of the report was delegated to Senator Kidd, with the aid of the Chairman and Secretary. It was the expressed intention to make the report very complete, and that it should contain the photographs of your Excellency and of the Commission, and further contain the cuts and a brief biographic sketch of the leading officers engaged in that hotly contested battle, as well as photographic views of the field and of the Little Levels Valley. That it also contain a picture of the old hospital now standing, and further a recommendation for a lake and flying field, and that it also contain letters and interviews obtained from soldiers engaged in the battle and other interesting incidents connected therewith.

Your Commission further reports that all of the matters set forth are filed herewith or printed in this report and asked to be made part thereof.

The Commission reports that Droop Mountain is a high elevation, nearly 3,000 feet above sea level, and contains several high peaks; the land is rolling, and is a limestone soil and the tract optioned is about one-half cleared. The woodland contains some valuable timber.

The scenery from this mountain is beautiful; stretching northward is what is known as the Little Levels of Pocahontas County, and a magnificent view of the Alleghany Mountains and the Green-